

Par. 1. **Material Transmitted and Purpose** --Transmitted with this Manual Letter is Revised Service Chapter 624-10, Foster Care Services – Independent Living Policies and Procedures. The old language has been struck through and highlighted in red. The new language is underlined and highlighted in red. PI-13-10 and PI-12-17 have been superseded in this manual letter.

Par. 2. Effective Date – **October 15, 2013**

Foster Care Services – Chafee Independent Living

State Chafee Independent Living Program, a.k.a. State Chafee Foster Care Independence Program 624-10-01-15

The Department of Human Services (NDDHS), Children and Family Services Division, will administer the Chafee Grant and oversee the Chafee Independent Living Programs state-wide.

Chafee Independent Living Administrator 624-10-01-20

Employee of the ~~Department of Human Services~~ NDDHS, Children and Family Services Division. The Chafee Independent Living Administrator is responsible for managing the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program grant and for overseeing the Regional Chafee Independent Living Programs.

Regional Chafee Independent Living Programs, a.k.a. Chafee Foster Care Independence Programs 624-10-01-25

The Chafee Independent Living Program is located within each of the eight regions throughout the state. The program is state-supervised and administered by a county and/or private provider agency. Regional Chafee Independent Living Programs are responsible for providing programming to all eligible foster care youth within the region, regardless of the county the youth resides in.

The Chafee IL Coordinator from the region in which the ~~custodial-county~~ custodian is located, is responsible for providing programming to eligible youth, regardless of the location of the youth's placement. However, if a transfer from one region to another would be in the best interest of the youth, a Chafee case transfer between regions may occur. This is to be determined by the Chafee IL Coordinators.

Chafee Independent Living Coordinators a.k.a. Chafee IL Coordinators 624-10-01-30

Chafee IL Coordinators are employees of a ~~designated-county-or-private~~ contracted provider agency, and are responsible for implementation of the Chafee Independent Program within an assigned region.

Foster Care 624-10-01-35

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of "foster care" is as follows: 24 hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the ~~state-public~~ agency (County, DJS, Tribe) has custody or placement and care responsibility. (Definition taken from "Making Sense of the ASFA Regulations, American Bar Association, p220).

This includes, but is not limited to placement in:

1. Ffamily foster care homes
2. Relative or kinship foster care homes
3. Residential Child Care Facilities (RCCF)
4. Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF)
5. Emergency shelters
- ~~5. Residential Treatment Centers~~
6. Pre-adoptive homes

Detention facilities, such as the Youth Correctional Center, and any other facility operated primarily for the detention of children youth who have been determined delinquent are not considered a foster care placements. Thus, these youth are not eligible for Chafee IL programming while in the stated corrections placement.

Trial Home Visits in Relation to "Aging Out of Foster Care" **624-10-01-40-05**

A youth will meet the definition of "Aging Out of Foster Care," if he/she is discharged from a n approved licensed foster care placement at the age of 17 ½ to 18 years of age, placed on "Trial Home Visit" status, and all of the following are present:

1. The public agency (County/DJS/Tribe) retains custody until the age of 18.
2. The youth is open within the foster care system on their 18th birthday.
3. There is a current court order at the time the youth turns 18 years of age.
4. Child and Family Team Meetings are occurring as required, with the latest being held within the ~~3~~ three months prior to the 18th birthday.

5. There is a current ~~care~~ case plan when the youth turns 18 with the "Trial Home Visit" clearly documented.

Education and Training Voucher a.k.a. ETV 624-10-01-50

The Education and Training Voucher provides financial resources specific to meet the education and training needs of youth who meet Foster Care ~~alumni~~ Alumni eligibility.

The Seven Purposes of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program 624-10-10-05

1. To identify children youth who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age and to help these children youth make the transition to self-sufficiency by providing services such as assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, training in daily living skills, training in budgeting and financial management skills, substance abuse prevention, and preventive health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention);
2. To help children youth who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment;
3. To help children youth who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions;
4. To provide personal and emotional support to children youth aging out of foster care, through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults;
5. To provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition from adolescence to

adulthood; and responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition from adolescence to adulthood;

6. To make available vouchers for education and training, including post-secondary training and education, to youths who have aged out of foster care; and
7. To provide the services referred to in this subsection to ~~children~~ youth who, after attaining 16 years of age, have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption.

Current Foster Care Youth (Priority I) 624-10-25-05-05

It is a requirement per ND Foster Care Policy 624-05 that custodians refer all youth who meet the following criteria to a regional Chafee Independent Living Program.

It is a requirement that the Chafee Independent Living Program provides programming to youth meeting the following criteria:

The youth:

1. Is currently in foster care, and
2. Is age 16 or older, and
3. Has been identified as "likely to age out of foster care", and
4. Is agreeable ~~Agrees~~ to receive programming and will be an active Chafee participant.

The Chafee IL Coordinator and the custodian will work collaboratively to ensure that these youth are offered participation in the Chafee Independent Living Program. However, it is the custodian's responsibility to initiate the referral.

Youth who refuse services or refuse to be active participants will not be provided Chafee Independent Living programming.

Chafee Independent Living Referrals 624-10-25-05-11

The custodian from a public agency (County, DJS, or Tribe) will refer eligible current foster care youth to the regional Chafee Independent Living Program.

Chafee Referral Procedure:

Custodian will:

- Communicate with the youth about his/her willingness to participate in the voluntary Chafee Independent Living Program.
- Complete the required Chafee IL referral paperwork
 - Chafee Referral Form (CF-1)
 - Multi-Agency Release of Information (SFN 970)
- Scan/Email, Fax, or Mail required forms to the regional Chafee IL Coordinator
- If youth is an active Chafee participant; Custodian will
 - Invite the Chafee IL Coordinator to quarterly Child & Family Team Meetings; and
 - Provide updated and ongoing information to the Chafee IL Coordinator regarding the youth (mailing address/placement change, current foster care case plan, etc).

Chafee IL Coordinator will:

- Review referral paperwork (CF-1+ ROI).
- Determine program eligibility.
- Contact the case manager to notify of youth eligibility.
- If the youth is eligible and interested; the Chafee IL Coordinator will schedule an appointment to meet with the youth to complete an assessment and review or create independent living goals.

Chafee Independent Living Denial 624-10-25-05-12

Custodians are required by Policy 624-05 to refer all youth age sixteen or greater to Chafee IL, however there are times availability to serve the youth due to priority status or program space is limited. Chafee IL Coordinators are required to send a formal letter to custodians for the

youth case file along with helpful resources to use in assessing and addressing the independent living needs for those who cannot be served in the Chafee IL program at that time.

Youth Refusals 624-10-25-05-13

Chafee Independent Living is federally funded with federal policy stating Chafee funds cannot be provided without the full involvement of the youth. Foster youth cannot be forced to participate in Chafee services. Court orders may indicate "independent living", but this is not inclusive to the Chafee IL Program.

If a current foster care youth refuses Chafee IL, services should be re-offered at least every six months while the youth is in foster care. A youth is more likely to accept a referral to Chafee if it is relevant to his or her life at the time. Chafee IL Coordinators must communicate with the foster care case manager about a youth refusing services and provide the case manager independent living resources to help meet independent living needs.

Foster Care Alumni (Priority I) 624-10-25-10-05

It is a requirement that the Chafee Independent Living Program provides programming to youth meeting the following criteria:

The youth:

1. "Aged out of foster care" at the age 18 or older, or
2. Exited foster care because he/she was adopted or entered kinship guardianship after the age of 16, and
3. Has not reached the age of 21, and
4. Is agreeable Agrees to receive programming and will be an active Chafee participant.

Youth who refuse services or refuse to be active participants will not be provided Chafee Independent Living programming.

Chafee Independent Living Referrals for Foster Care Alumni 624-10-25-10-11

Custodians are required to inform foster care youth, who are aging out of care, of services available to them through the Chafee Independent Living Program upon discharge.

Chafee IL Coordinator are required to provide services to eligible youth who have aged out of foster care and who agree to be active participants in the program until age 21.

Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Component 624-10-25-15

The Chafee Education and Training Voucher (ETV) ~~P~~rogram provides resources specially to meet specific to meeting the education and training needs of Foster Care Alumni.

The ETV Program was established by Congress as part of reauthorization of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act, known as the "Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments of 2001" (P.L 107-133). Title 2, Section 201 of the Act amended the Foster Care Independence Act by adding ETVs as the sixth purpose of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

ETV Eligibility 624-10-25-15-05 Added PI-12-17

~~Youth meeting all of the following criteria will be considered for an Education and Training Voucher Award.~~

- ~~1. —Youth who were discharged from foster care on their 18th birthday, or continue to be in foster care past their 18th birthday, provided they were in foster care for at least one year, and have not reached their 21st birthday at the time of application.~~
- ~~2. —Youth who were adopted or entered kinship guardianship from foster care after age 16, but have not reached their 21st birthday.~~

- ~~3. — Youth participating in the ETV Program on their 21st birthday can remain eligible until they turn 23, as long as they are enrolled and making satisfactory progress toward completing their post secondary education or training program.~~
- ~~4. — Youth who are United States Citizens or qualified non-citizens.~~
- ~~5. — Youth who are, or will be enrolled into a program at an accredited or preaccredited college, university, technical, or vocational school.~~
- ~~6. — Youth who agree to be an active participant in the Chafee Independent Living Program while they are receiving ETV funding.~~

The youth meeting the following criteria will be considered for an Education and Training Voucher Award.

1. **Youth who "aged out of foster care",** were discharged on or after their 18th birthday, or **continue in 18+ Continued Care** past their 18th birthday, and who have not reached their 21st birthday at the time of application.
2. Youth who were adopted or entered kinship guardianship from foster care after age 16, but have not reached their 21st birthday.
3. Youth participating in the ETV Program on their 21st birthday can remain eligible until they turn age 23, as long as they are enrolled and making satisfactory progress toward completing their post-secondary education or training program.
4. Youth who are United States Citizens or qualified non-citizens.
5. Youth who are, or will be enrolled into a program at an accredited or preaccredited college, university, technical or vocational school.
6. Youth who agree to be an active participant in the Chafee Independent Living Program while they are receiving ETV funding.

7. ETV award preference will be given to youth who were in foster care for twelve months or greater.

Cost of Attendance 624-10-25-15-10-15

The cost of attendance is calculated by the Institution of Higher Education in establishing a youth's financial need and can vary depending on the student's full-time or part-time status, and where the student is receiving instruction. In general, the definition includes a student's:

- Tuition, fees, and other equipment or materials required of all students in the same course of study.
- Books, supplies and an allowance for transportation costs and miscellaneous personal expenses, including computers
- Room and board (which may vary depending on whether the student lives at home, in student-housing or an apartment)
- Child care expenses for a student who is a parent
- Accommodations related to the student's disability, such as a personal assistant or specialized equipment that is not paid for by another source
- Expenses related to the youth's work experience in a cooperative education program
- Student loan fees or insurance premiums on the student loan.

The Institution of Higher Education calculates a general "cost of attendance" for all students, and they have some flexibility in determining costs of attendance for individual students. For those ETV applicants who have additional expenses that were not included in the school's calculation of the "cost of attendance", it is in their best interest to work with the school to have this figure raised to reflect their actual needs. The Chafee IL Coordinator can assist the student in working with the school as needed.

~~ND Department of Human Services (DHS) NDDHS~~ requires documentation and verification of costs from the Institution of Higher Education to support the ETV applicant's "Cost of Attendance" ~~figure be included in the application packet.~~ NDDHS will not issue an ETV award without this documentation included in the ETV application packet (SFN 255 + SFN 252).

Probationary Status 624-10-25-15-10-25-05

A student who is receiving ETV funding will be placed on **Probationary Status** if their GPA is less than a 2.0 at the end of the semester. Probationary status is determined by the semester GPA, not a cumulative GPA. The student will have one semester to raise their GPA to a 2.0 or higher to remain eligible for ETV funding for subsequent semesters.

Out-of-State Youth 624-10-25-15-10-35

The state in which a Foster Care Alumni resides is responsible for providing an eligible youth with **a the Education Training Voucher**. This provision, however, does not apply to a Foster Care Alumni who already is receiving a voucher and moves to another State for the sole purpose of attending and Institution of Higher Education. In that instance, the youth's original State of residence will continue to provide a voucher to the youth for as long as the youth remains eligible for the program.

ETV Recipient's Eligibility for Chafee Flex Funds 624-10-25-15-10-40

Chafee Flex Funds may not be used to supplement the \$5,000 per academic year ceiling for a youth in the ETV Program for "cost of attendance" **related** expenses. Appropriations law precludes this. However, if the Chafee IL Coordinator determines that the youth has expenses that are not related to the cost of attendance, therefore not allowable under the ETV, it is an option to supplement ETV funding with Flex Funds if the youth is under the age of 21.

Maximum Age Requirements 624-10-25-15-10-55

Foster Care Alumni must have participated in the ETV Program prior to their 21st birthday to continue receiving ETV funds until the age of 23. There is no flexibility for funding youth who are over age 21 and who were not receiving the ETV on their 21st birthday. Students are not eligible for the ETV after their 23rd birthday.

ETV Application Process 624-10-25-15-15

All youth pursuing ETV Funding must currently be involved in, or agree to be involved in, the Foster Care Alumni Component of the Chafee Independent Living Program.

The Chafee IL Coordinator will assist interested participants with applying for an ETV. Applications are available on-line as SFN 252 and SFN 255. The completed application is forwarded to the Department of Human Services NDDHS: Children and Family Services Chafee Independent Living Administrator for award determination.

The ETV Application Deadlines Include:

Fall Semester = August 15th
Spring Semester = December 15th
Summer Semester = May 15th

Award Determination 624-10-25-15-20

Award determinations are made by the Department of Human Services NDDHS: Children and Family Services Chafee Independent Living Administrator and are based on the following:

1. Participant Eligibility
2. ETV Funding Availability
3. Completion and submission ed and Timely of the ETV Application Packet in a timely manner

Not all youth who meet the eligibility criteria will receive an ETV award. Likewise, not all youth who receive an ETV will receive the \$5,000 per year maximum.

Under Federal law, States are required to take appropriate steps to prevent duplication of benefits under the ETV and other Federal and Federally supported programs.

The Department cannot change the Cost of Attendance figure, nor can the Department award more than the following formula allows:

$$\text{ETV Cost Calculation:} \\ \text{Cost of Attendance} - \text{Other Federal Funds/Grants/Scholarships} = \text{ETV Award.}$$

Award Disbursement 624-10-25-15-25

The ~~Department of Human Services~~ NDDHS will issue the monetary ETV award directly to the Institution of Higher Education. Youth participants will not receive direct payment from NDDHS.

~~Chafee Independent Living Referrals 624-10-30-05 REPEALED~~

~~The custodian will refer youth to a Regional Chafee Independent Living Program, the Chafee IL Coordinator will determine program priority. The custodian will invite the Chafee IL Coordinator to be a member of the Child and Family Team, and extend invitations to all future meetings. A copy the youth's established care plan will be provided to the Chafee IL Coordinator.~~

Chafee Independent Living Plans 624-10-30-10

~~The youth~~ Youth participants should assist in the development of their independent living plan. There ~~should is~~ not a requirement that be a Chafee Independent Living Plan be developed by the Chafee IL Coordinator in addition to the youth's established ~~care~~ foster care case plan. The independent living plan should be developed collaboratively by the

~~custodian, youth, and Chafee IL Coordinator to identify identified Chafee Independent Living independent living~~ goals ~~and tasks~~. The ~~plan~~ should be attached to ~~and/or~~ incorporated into the youth's ~~care foster care case~~ plan; ~~discussed whenever possible and updated ongoing until discharge~~.

A copy of the youth's ~~care foster care case~~ plan ~~identifying independent living goals and tasks~~ must be filed in the Chafee Independent Living Program file ~~if a Chafee Independent Living Plan is not created separately~~.

Assessing Independent Living Needs 624-10-30-15

It is required that all foster care youth, age 16 and older, have their independent living strengths and needs assessed. ~~Custodians are responsible to assess independent living and transition needs of youth in care; Chafee Independent Living programming is one way to assist Custodians.~~

Assessing Foster Care Youth, Participating in the Chafee Independent Living Program 624-10-30-15-05

If the youth is an active participant in the Chafee Independent Living Program, the Chafee IL Coordinator will administer an authorized independent living assessment tool ~~annually or more often as needed~~.

The ~~Chafee Independent Living IL~~ Coordinator will attend the Child and Family Team meetings. The youth's ~~independent living~~ assessment will be discussed and incorporated into the ~~foster~~ care ~~case~~ plan as applicable.

Assessing Foster Care Youth, Age 16-18, Not Participating in the Chafee Independent Living Program 624-10-30-15-10

All foster care youth, age 16 and older, are required to have their independent living strengths and needs assessed. If the youth is not an active participant in the Chafee Independent Living Program, ~~it is a~~ **requirement of** the custodian must assess the youth's independent living needs.

Custodians have the option to choose the assessment tool which will best determine the youth's needs. If custodians are unaware of available independent living assessments they may contact a Chafee IL Coordinator or the NDDHS Chafee IL Administrator for reference. Independent living needs must be incorporated into the youth's foster care case plan in order to meet federal requirements.

Addressing Independent Living Needs 624-10-30-20

All foster care youth, age 16 and older, are required to have their needs relating to independent living addressed. Custodians are responsible to address independent living and transition needs of youth in foster care; Chafee Independent Living programming is one way to assist Custodians.

Addressing Independent Living Needs of Foster Care Youth, Participating in the Chafee Independent Living Program 624-10-30-20-05

Based on the results of the provided assessment(s), the youth, Chafee IL Coordinator and the Child and Family Team will identify goals and incorporate them into the youth's foster care case plan.

Addressing Independent Living Needs of Foster Care Youth, Not Participating in the Chafee Independent Living Program 624-10-30-20-10

Based on the results of the provided assessment(s), the youth, custodian, and the Child and Family Team will identify goals and incorporate them into the youth's foster care case plan.

Independent Living Related Goals 624-10-30-25**Goals for Foster Care Youth Participating in the Chafee Independent Living Program 624-10-30-25-05**

Goals are individualized according to the youth's strengths and needs.

Goals focus on the seven Chafee outcomes as identified in 624-10-10-15-05. Goals are discussed at the quarterly Child and Family Team Meeting meetings and are incorporated into the established foster care case plan. The Chafee IL Coordinator, in conjunction with the Child and Family Team, will collaboratively assist the youth with meeting stated goals.

Goals for Foster Care Youth Not Participating in the Chafee Independent Living Program 624-10-30-25-10

Goals are individualized according to the youth's strengths and needs.

Goals focus on the seven Chafee outcomes as identified by in 624-10-10-15-05. Goals are discussed at the quarterly Child and Family Team Mmeetings and are incorporated into the established foster care case plan. The Child and Family Team will collaboratively assist the youth with meeting stated goals. The Chafee IL Coordinator will be available for consultation, as needed.

~~Chafee Independent Living Referrals for Foster Care Alumni 624-10-35-05—REPEALED~~

~~Custodians are required to inform foster care youth, who are aging out of care, of services available to them through the Chafee Independent Living Program.~~

~~Chafee IL Coordinator are required to provide services to eligible youth who have aged out of foster care and who agree to be active participants in the program.~~

Chafee Independent Living Plans for Foster Care Alumni 624-10-35-10

Chafee IL Coordinators should continue to use the Wraparound Process whenever possible after a youth has been discharged from foster care and continues to participate in the Chafee Independent Living Program.

When a youth is discharged from foster care and no longer has an established ~~care-case~~ plan, the creation and ~~use~~ development of an individualized Chafee Independent Living Plan is required and must be filed in the youth's Chafee IL program file.

Assessing Independent Living Needs of Foster Care Alumni 624-10-35-15

All Foster Care Alumni entering the Chafee Independent Living Program will have their independent living needs assessed by using the ND CFCFIP Assessment or other determined assessment tools.

The Chafee IL Coordinator will help the youth develop a Chafee Independent Living Plan based on the results of the assessment.

Chafee Age Maximum 624-10-37

Chafee Independent Living program funds cannot be used to provide services or flex funding to youth beyond the age of 21, with the exception of applicable ETV program youth.

Chafee Flexible Funding 624-10-40

Flex funds are payments made, or tangible resources given, directly to the eligible youth, or made on behalf of the eligible youth. Flex funds fall into two categories:

1. General Flex Funding ~~or~~
2. Room and Board Flex Funding

General Flex Funds 624-10-40-05

General Flex Funds may be used to provide reasonable incentives to youth to encourage program participation or goal achievement. These funds may also be used to pay for goods or services on behalf of a youth ~~or young adult~~ participant. These funds can be applied to a variety of non-housing related expenses that are barriers to a youth's transition. Appropriate use of these funds will improve his or her likelihood for achieving self-sufficiency.

General Flex Funds Eligibility Requirements 624-10-40-05-05

To be considered for General Flex Funds a youth must:

1. Be between the ages of 16 and 21, ~~and~~ ~~and~~
2. Be a current foster care youth, or have been in foster care at the age of 16 or older, ~~and~~ ~~and~~
3. Be participating in a Chafee IL Program, ~~and~~ ~~and~~
4. Have an established foster care case plan or Chafee IL Plan.

Accessing General Flex Funds 624-10-40-05-10

For Current Foster Care Youth 624-10-40-05-10-05

The Chafee IL Coordinator will document the need and approved flex funding amount on the Chafee Flex Funding Request Form (CF-5). ~~Members of The the~~ Child and Family Team may be consulted to discuss significant funding requests.

For Foster Care Alumni 624-10-40-05-10-10

The Chafee IL Coordinator will document the need and approved flex funding amount on the Chafee Flex Funding Request Form (CF-5).

General Flex Fund Determination 624-10-40-05-15

The Chafee IL Coordinator will make the final determination regarding the flex funding request. The determination will be based on need and availability of funding. If necessary, ~~the Child and Family Team can be consulted, as well as~~ the NDDHS Chafee Independent Living Administrator can be consulted to assist with determining appropriate use of flex funds.

General Flex Fund Cap 624-10-40-05-20

\$250.00 per youth per federal fiscal year (October 1 – September 30).

Eligible youth are not “entitled” to flex funds. Due to the limited amount of funds available, most youth will not receive ~~this~~ the full amount. Requests will be prioritized by ~~the~~ youth needs.

Room and Board Flex Funds 624-10-40-10

Room and Board Flex Funds are used to assist youth with rent, deposits, utilities, or room and board household start up purchases arrangements, ~~and utilities~~. Funding is intended to help youth get moved into a permanent home, not to prolong unnecessary dependency, nor to pay for continued residential treatment.

Accessing Room and Board Flex Funds 624-10-40-10-10**For Eligible Foster Care Alumni 624-10-40-10-10-05**

The Chafee IL Coordinator will document the need and approved flex funding amount on the Chafee Flex Funding Request Form (CF-5).

**Room and Board Flex Fund Determination
624-10-40-10-15**

The Chafee IL Coordinator will make the final determination regarding the flex funding request. The determination will be based on need and availability of funding. If necessary, the NDDHS Chafee Independent Living Administrator can be consulted to assist with determining appropriate use of flex funds.

Flexible Funding Guidelines 624-10-40-15

Regional Chafee Independent Living Programs will be provided with a flex fund budget. This will be the total amount of funds available to the Region for the fiscal year, and there will be no additional funds available from the Department. These funds are to be made available to eligible youth, who are actively participating in services with the Chafee IL Coordinator throughout the region, not ~~just~~ solely the county where the program is located.

The Chafee IL Coordinators are responsible for tracking these expenditures to assure that they do not pay out more funds to youth than can be reimbursed. These funds are to be used in their entirety as a flexible funding source to assist youth with meeting the goals on their established care case plan/Chafee IL Plan. The contracted Chafee IL Provider Agencies Agency will have the flexibility to develop their own procedures regarding the disbursement of funds to youth.

The following state and federal requirements must be followed by agencies providing Chafee services:

- Chafee IL Coordinators must complete the Chafee Funding Request Form (CF-5) documenting youth eligibility and the funding justification.
- Youth receiving funding must be ~~full~~-active participants in the Chafee IL Program and have an established foster care case plan or Chafee IL Plan.
- Funding will be utilized to meet the transition goals specific to the youth's needs.
- The Chafee Independent Living Program is not to be used as strictly a "funding source". The funding is limited, and existing community resources and other funding sources should be exhausted prior to utilizing Chafee funds.
- Flex funds can only be dispersed to youth meeting eligibility criteria.
- Provider agencies are responsible for documenting and keeping receipts of all program and youth flex fund expenditures.

- Provider agencies must record individual youth expenditures; clearly indicating which expenditures are designated General Flex and which are Room and Board Flex Funds.
- Funding expenditures will be viewed annually during the Provider Agency Quality Assurance Review and will be reported to the ~~Department of Human Services~~ **NDDHS** in the year-end report.
- 100% of flex funds must be used as direct financial assistance and/or incentives to youth. Any remaining funds will be returned to the Department each year.
- Agencies will not be reimbursed for flex fund expenditures over and above the annual amount awarded to the agency.
- Provider Agencies must submit the total monthly flex fund expenditures on the **Independent Living Monthly Claim Form**, to the Department on a monthly basis.
- County provider agencies will be reimbursed by submitting **SFN 119** to the Department on a monthly basis.
- Contracted private provider agencies will be reimbursed by submitting **SFN 1763** to the Department on a monthly basis.

Flex Fund Expenditures Not Allowed 624-10-40-20

Flexible Funds are provided in order to help eligible youth successfully transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. Any expenditure that does not meet the above principle for the use of Chafee funds is not allowed.

Chafee funds may not be used to take the place of (supplant) Federal or state funds that are otherwise available for the same purposes. Federally funded day care, subsidized housing, foster care administration and training, adoption assistance, TANF, Child Protective Services, etc. are federally funded programs that may also assist Chafee eligible youth.

Additionally, Chafee funds may not be used to match other Federal Funds. Extreme caution should be exercised when using Chafee funds to assure that supplantation does not occur. If a worker is considering using Chafee funds for an expense that would have been paid from other sources; were

these funds not available? Supplantation should be ruled out prior to proceeding and efforts to avoid supplantation should be documented on the Chafee Funding Request Form [\(CF-5\)](#).

Independent Living Programming in Relation to Permanency 624-10-45

A decision to provide independent living services to a youth does not absolve the state from continuing to make reasonable efforts toward permanency for the youth. Independent living is not a permanency goal, and is not an alternative to adoption for [children youth](#) who are eligible. The Act specifies that enrollment in independent living programs should occur concurrently with continued efforts to locate and achieve permanency.

Chafee Eligibility for Out-of-State Youth 624-10-50

If a youth in foster care, who meets eligibility for the Chafee Independent Living Program ~~is Programming~~ is placed in another state, the state of origin must fund the identified services for that youth. The sending state is also responsible for foster care maintenance payments and case planning, which includes a written description of the programs and services that will be provided to help youth age 16 or older prepare for the transition from foster care to independence. [States can request courtesy case management from an out of state Chafee IL provider, but the request will not always be accepted due to the voluntary nature of the program structure. If not accepted, the Custodian is responsible to ensure that the foster youth's independent living needs are assessed and addressed regardless of placement location. The North Dakota Chafee program is not the best option for youth placed out of state, as the Chafee IL Coordinator cannot meet with the youth regularly to achieve set goals and tasks.](#)

Chafee Eligibility for Youth in Kinship ~~or~~ Relative Foster Care Placements 624-10-55

Foster [care](#) youth [under the custody of a public agency \(County, DJS, Tribe\)](#) and placed in Kinship or Relative ~~Care~~ [foster care Placements](#), ~~who~~

~~are under the custody of the state,~~ are eligible for consideration in the Chafee Independent Living Program. A kinship or relative placement is considered an approved North Dakota foster care placement regardless of if the home is receiving state reimbursement or payment for the youth's stay. ~~And the youth is eligible for general flex funds and services based on priority.~~

~~For the purposes of Room and Board flex~~ **Flex funding and the ETV:** youth in kinship or relative foster care placements are eligible for General Flex Funds. ~~However, youth~~ must meet the definition of "aging out of foster care" to receive Room and Board funds or the ETV.

Chafee IL Coordinators will ~~identify~~ verify eligibility and youth priority status according to policy, funding guidelines, youth's individualized needs, and ~~service~~ availability.

Chafee Eligibility for Youth Discharged From Foster Care Who Enter Guardianship 624-10-60

Youth, over the age of 16, who enter Guardianship post discharge from foster care, ~~after age 16,~~ are eligible for consideration in the Chafee Independent Living Program as a Foster Care Alumni Priority 2.

~~For the purposes of flex~~ **Flex funding and ETV:** youth who enter Guardianship are eligible for General Flex Funds. ~~However, youth regardless of their age,~~ are not eligible for Room and Board Flex Funds or the ETV as they did not "age out of foster care". ~~However, these youth are eligible for consideration for General Flex Funds.~~

Chafee IL Coordinators will ~~identify~~ verify youth eligibility and priority status according to policy, funding guidelines, youth's individualized needs, and ~~service~~ availability.

Chafee Eligibility for Youth Who Were Adopted or Enter a Kinship Guardianship 624-10-65

Youth, over the age of 16, who were adopted from foster care or entered a kinship guardianship ~~after age 16,~~ are eligible for consideration in the Chafee Independent Living Program as a Foster Care Alumni Priority 1;

providing they meet all criteria excluding ~~the~~ "aging out of foster care" criteria.

~~For the purposes of flex~~ **Flex funding and the ETV:** ÷ youth who were adopted or entered kinship guardianship over the age of 16 regardless of their age, are eligible for General Flex Funds and the ETV. However, youth are not eligible for Room and Board Flex Funds. ~~However, if adopted or entered kinship guardianship after age 16 they are eligible for consideration for General Flex Funds and the ETV.~~

Chafee IL Coordinators will ~~identify~~ verify youth eligibility and priority status according to funding guidelines, youth's individualized needs, and ~~service~~ availability.

Chafee Eligibility for Undocumented Immigrant Youth 624-10-75

If youth are in the custody of the state child welfare public agency (County, DJS, Tribe), whether or not they are citizens or legal residents of the U.S., they are eligible for all needed child welfare services, including Chafee Independent Living services/funding.

Service providers, caseworkers, and advocates should keep in mind that the process for acquiring legal status is lengthy, and that young people who reach the age of 18 without legal status are at very high risk of detention and /or deportation by immigration authorities.

Unaccompanied minors who enter foster care may be categorically eligible for citizenship under special provisions for juveniles (Special Juvenile Immigrant Status). The child welfare agency is responsible for pursuing this status on behalf of youth in care and for costs incurred in the legal process of pursuing citizenship.

Chafee Eligibility for Native American Youth 624-10-85

Chafee Independent Living services and funding are made available to Native American ~~children~~ youth on the same basis as all eligible foster care youth.

Roles and Responsibilities of Chafee Independent Living Coordinators 624-10-90-10

- Adhere to State and Federal Chafee Guidelines.
- Consult with the [NDDHS Chafee](#) Independent Living Administrator as needed.
- Develop and conduct an effective regional Chafee IL Program.
- Assist custodians identify youth who are age 16 and older and are likely to remain in care until the age of 18.
- Develop a working relationship with youth, their caregivers, custodians, informal supports and social workers, using a positive youth development and wraparound approach.
- Partner with all ~~county social service~~ public child welfare agencies (County, DJS, Tribe) within the assigned region to include all eligible youth.
- Partner with the broader community to provide a supportive learning environment for youth, which may include engaging community partners in mentoring, job placement, providing tangible supports to the Chafee IL Program, sponsoring youth, educating youth about subjects such as banking, credit, car purchases, comparison shopping, and other life skill areas.
- Participate in [quarterly](#) Child and Family Team Meetings.
- Administer [independent living](#) assessments [with active participants](#).
- [Assist youth participants and custodian in developing and develop an individualized \[independent living\]\(#\) plans.](#)
- Enter all Chafee Independent Living participant required data into the FRAME system.
- Respond to data requests from the [NDDHS Chafee](#) Independent Living Administrator in a timely manner.
- Provide required reports to the [NDDHS Chafee](#) Independent Living Administrator in a timely manner.
- Participate in required Chafee trainings and quarterly meetings;

- Assist eligible youth with the ETV process.
- Facilitate ~~an~~ ongoing ~~Regional Youth Leadership Group~~ youth groups.
- Assist your Provider Agency with developing an annual budget for the regional Chafee Independent Living Program.
- Verify eligibility for Chafee Flex Funds.
- Assure that Chafee expenditures are allowable.
- Assure that supplantation of funds does not occur.
- ~~Identify and document available Chafee IL match dollars.~~
- Provide documentation of funding and flex fund expenditures to your Provider Agency's fiscal office on a monthly basis.
- Prepare documentation for the annual onsite review/financial audit.
- Gather input from current/former foster care youth for program design and implementation.
- Advocate for current/former foster care youth and encourage youth to be self-advocates and leaders.
- Assist with inviting youth participants to the Children & Family Service Review (CFSR) full reviews.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Chafee Provider Agencies Agency 624-10-90-15

- Administer programming in accordance with ~~Department of Human Services-~~ NDDHS Chafee Independent Living Policy 624-10.
- Adhere to Chafee State and Federal Guidelines.
- Issue prompt payment in response to approved flexible funding requests made by the Regional Chafee IL Coordinator/s.
- Submit the monthly claim form to the Independent Living Administrator by the 5th day of the subsequent month.

- Submit the completed SFN 119 form (as applicable for county agencies) to Fiscal Administration by the 10th day of the subsequent month.
- Submit the completed SFN 1763 form (as applicable for private provider agencies) to Fiscal Administration by the 10th day of the subsequent month.
- Keep required documentation for all Chafee expenditures, including flex fund expenditures.
- Provide supervision to the Regional Chafee Independent Living Coordinator/s.
- Work collaboratively with ~~the Department~~ NDDHS to provide regional program supervision.
- Obtain approval from the NDDHS Chafee Independent Living Administrator prior to making program changes.
- Provide a written request to the NDDHS Chafee Independent Living Administrator pertaining to any proposed budget line item changes as needed.
- Fill vacant regional Chafee Independent Living Coordinator positions in a timely manner.
- Ensure that the regional Chafee Independent Living Coordinator/s meet required qualifications.

Roles and Responsibilities of Foster Parents 624-10-90-20

- Collaborate with the Chafee IL Coordinator and Custodian regarding the youth's needs and goals pertaining to Independent Living.
- Participate in quarterly Child and Family Team Meetings.
- Implement agreed upon tasks as identified in the established foster care case plan.
- Provide youth with tools, resources, and hands-on learning experiences relating to Independent Living.

Roles and Responsibilities of Residential Facilities 624-10-90-25

- Implement agreed upon tasks as identified in the established foster care case plan.
- Collaborate with the Chafee IL Coordinator and Custodian regarding the youth's needs and goals pertaining to Independent Living.
- Participate in quarterly Child and Family Team Meetings.
- Implement programming to meet the youth's identified independent living needs as applicable.

Roles and Responsibilities of Custodians 624-10-90-30

Regarding youth age 16 and older, identified as likely to remain in care until their 18th birthday:

- Identify and refer current foster care youth, age 16 and older, who have been identified as likely to remain in foster care until the age of 18 to the Chafee IL Coordinator.
- Extend invitations to the Chafee IL Coordinators to attend the Foster Care Child and Family Team Meetings for all youth participating in the Chafee Independent Living Program.
- Incorporate the identified strengths, needs and goals relating to independent living into the foster care case plan.
- Encourage the Foster Care Child and Family Team members to assist in completing identified independent living tasks.
- Encourage the youth to participate in Chafee IL as a the Foster Care Alumni Component following their discharge from care until age 21.
- Encourage the youth to participate in the Chafee IL "Education and Training Voucher component" following their discharge from care.
- Inform youth that it is an option to remain in or return to foster care within six months of their recent discharge foster care past their 18th birthday for the purpose of completing high school, pursuing vocational training, or attending college in the 18+ Continued Program.

Regarding youth age 16 and older, identified as not likely to remain in care until their 18th birthday:

- Utilize the Foster Care Child and Family Team to assess the youth's strengths and needs pertaining to independent living.
- Determine, with the assistance of the Foster Care Child and Family Team, and the Chafee IL Coordinator, if the youth's particular situation warrants a referral to the Regional Chafee Independent Living Program.
- Incorporate the youth's strengths and needs into the tasks and goals pertaining to independent living into the foster care case plan.
- Encourage the Foster Care Child and Family Team members to implement assigned independent living tasks.
- Collaborate with and complete referrals to community partners as needed to address the youth's independent living needs.
- Consult with the Chafee IL Coordinator as needed.

**Roles and Responsibilities of Community Partners
624-10-90-35**

- Collaborate with the Chafee IL Coordinator and Custodian regarding the youth's needs, strengths, and goals pertaining to independent living.
- Participate in quarterly Child and Family team Meetings as requested.
- Implement agreed upon tasks as identified in the foster care case plan.

Youth Leadership 624-10-95

ND Youth Leadership Board 624-10-95-05

The ~~Department of Human Services~~ NDDHS Chafee Independent Living Administrator will facilitate the organization of quarterly ND Youth Leadership Board meetings and monthly conference calls at the state level.

~~Representatives from the regional Youth Leadership Councils will be invited to participate on the ND Youth Leadership Board.~~

Applications for Youth Leadership Board membership are required in the Children and Family Services office by May 15th each year.

ND Youth Leadership Board members assisted in creating the ND Youth Web Site. Viewable at <http://www.nd.gov/ndyouth>

Regional Youth Leadership Councils Groups 624-10-95-10

Chafee IL Coordinators will implement and facilitate an ongoing ~~Youth Leadership Council~~ Chafee IL youth groups throughout the year. Information regarding the ND Youth Leadership Board projects will be discussed as a means of education and awareness.

~~Representatives from the regional Youth Leadership Councils will be invited to participate on the ND Youth Leadership Board.~~

Quality Assurance/Data Collection Measures 624-10-100

The ~~Department of Human Services~~ NDDHS Chafee Independent Living Administrator will conduct an onsite annual quality assurance review at each regional office to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements. Each year expectations and information is provided to the regional offices for preparation of the Chafee Independent Living quality assurance review.

Chafee IL Coordinators will follow all required assessment and data collection procedures and provide necessary information to the State Independent Living Administrator in a timely manner.

~~The~~ Chafee Independent Living Program participant data is required for entry by the Chafee IL Coordinators into the ND FRAME System ongoing.

Health Care Directives 624-10-105

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148) was signed by the President on March 23, 2010. The law amended three sections of Titles IV-B and IV-E to ensure that children youth receiving independent living services, education and training vouchers and those aging out of foster care have been provided information about the importance of a health care directive. Beginning October 1, 2010, North Dakota is required to provide education to foster care youth about the importance of designating another individual to make health care treatment decisions on their behalf if he/she becomes unable to make such decisions and if he/she does not have or does not want, a relative who would otherwise be authorized under State law to make such decisions.

Effective October 1, 2010 foster care case managers must include the health care directive education as part of the youth's transition plan. Chafee Independent Living Coordinators assisting with independent living and the ETV application must ensure that youth receive education on the health care directive as well.

Health Care Directive

Educational tools provided by the Department to meet requirements:

- Health Care Directive Brochure
- Health Care Directive Form can be downloaded from www.nd.gov/dhs/info/docs/hcdirective.pdf
- Foster Care Discharge Checklist – Add "Health Care Directive" as a discussion item under health topics.

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) 624-10-110 Added PI-13-10

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), required by the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, will track the services and outcomes of youth transitioning from foster care. NYTD requires state child welfare agencies to collect outcome data and report data in two specific areas:

1. **Independent Living Services** - document all independent living services provided to youth by public agency custodians, Chafee IL, and Partnerships. Independent living service categories include but are not limited to mentoring, academic support, career preparation, and health education. All independent living service categories can be found in FRAME.
2. **NYTD Survey** - administer and collect survey data via a three part survey of all eligible youth that are in foster care after their 17th birthday, at age 17, then survey a cohort of those young people youth again at ages 19 and 21. The state must also collect data on all independent living services provided to youth, such as mentoring, academic support, career preparation, and health education.

Every three years (FFY 2011, 2014, 2017....) North Dakota will be surveying a new group of 17 year old foster care youth including adjudicated delinquent youth under the custody of DJS and Title IV-E Tribal foster care youth. NDDHS Children and Family Services will identify eligible youth from FRAME and will communicate with case managers for assistance in administering the NYTD Survey as needed.

NDDHS Children and Family Services created and updated the NYTD Handbook to better assist professionals with procedures, data entry requirements, and an understanding of roles and tasks. The **NYTD Handbook can be found at:**

<http://www.state.nd.us/robo/projects/62410/62410.htm>

North Dakota requires regular data entry into FRAME under:

- Chafee Independent Living Program Participation
- Independent Living Services

- ~~NYTD Survey~~

~~Educational tools provided by the Department to meet requirements:~~

- ~~NYTD Handbook~~
- ~~FRAME Independent Living Coordinators Guide~~